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EDITOR R.PALME DUTT

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Eddie Marsden, Dai Francis,
John Reidford, Simon Fraser
and Beryl Huffinley

Mobilisation After May Day

John Purton
**Booms, Slumps and the
General Crisis**

José Pina and others
Portugal Special

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**Jewish Emigrants
from the USSR**

LABOUR MONTHLY

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Notes of the Month

LESSONS OF HISTORY

'History is past politics, and politics present history.'

J. R. SEELEY

May 14, 1973

If the European Security Conference takes place, as now widely anticipated, in the later summer or autumn of the present year, this will be a historic landmark, which, if followed up by the peoples, can open a new era of co-operation between the peoples of different social systems to replace the old prolonged and ruinous record of the cold war. At such a moment it is necessary to take a longer view, and to draw the lessons of the preceding historical period, which is now moving into a changed world situation, not only to prepare for this new situation, but to avoid a repetition of the negative features of that preceding period, the period of the cold war, since many of the conceptions deriving from that period are still widely held, and have still to be overcome.

Towards a New Era

The battle is not yet over. The enemies of the European Security Conference are still open in their denunciations and warnings; and, even though all the governments concerned have united to participate in the project, these representatives of hostility may still try to utilise their influence in reactionary quarters, as in the military command of Nato, to seek to sabotage the outcome. The flames of war still burn in key regions, as in the continued bombardment, and supply of arms and finance and 'military advisers' against the peoples of Indo-China, even after the signing of the Paris Peace Agreement and in shameful violation of that agreement; or the explosive menace in the Middle East, with Israel's defiance of the United Nations and aggressive raids in Lebanon. But the main tide of the modern world is the tide of advance of the peoples towards new victories.

Signals of Advance

The victory crowning the long decades of indomitable struggle of the Vietnam people with the signature of the Paris Peace Agreement, and enforced withdrawal of American combat troops, has represented,

despite the continuing military action, a historic victory, not only for the people of Vietnam and the peoples of Asia, but for all the peoples of the world, including the progressive sections of the US people who have campaigned against the infamous war. So today the agreement in principle for the holding of the European Security Conference represents a victory, not only for the aims of the peoples of Europe to win a future of peace and security, but for the peoples of the whole world, since Europe has been the hotbed of two world wars ravaging all mankind. The visit of General Secretary Brezhnev to meet Chancellor Brandt in Bonn in May, together with the further projected visit to Washington in June, are a significant expression of the new conditions opening to replace the old rigidity of the cold war antagonism. When the British Government of Tory reaction is actively engaged to establish its embassy in the German Democratic Republic, which until recently it refused to recognise, this is also a measure of changed conditions affecting even the most backward. All this points to favourable possibilities for the peoples of Europe, East and West, to advance to an era of extending co-operation, which can be of decisive importance for the future of the world. At such a moment of change, opening the prospects of a new world situation, the lessons of history of our period during these decades need to be reviewed in a wider compass.

Theories of History

Cynicism used to declare that the only lesson of history is that the lessons of history are never learnt. But Marxism has shown that the lessons of the past can be learned and understood in such a way as to provide a guide for the future. A thousand theories of history have been propounded by a host of thinkers through all the generations from ancient times to the present day. Some theories have defined history in terms of religion or fate or the role of great men. Optimistic theorists have defined the existing social and political order of their particular country and period as the height of human achievement to be attained gradually by more backward sections of the human race. Pessimistic theorists have painted dark pictures of an approaching cataclysm bringing the downfall of civilisation, and defined history as an eternal cycle of the rise and fall of civilisations in an endless succession. Utopian theorists have pictured the prospect of a future happy millennium to be won by reason. Sceptical theorists have repudiated the conception of a theory of history, and defined history as an irrational succession of events and accidents without logical connection. Empirical theorists have turned aside

from any attempts to formulate a general theory of history as an unprofitable pursuit, and preferred to concentrate on detailed factual research on some limited field or institution.

Marxism and History

In contrast to this multiple and variegated array, Marxism, with the materialist conception of history, brought for the first time a method which, instead of trying to impose idealist preconceptions or assumptions upon history, opened the way, through the understanding of the development of the productive forces, and production relations on the basis of the development of the productive forces, finding expression in the role of classes, class conflict and the active role of human beings, to begin to master the laws of development of human society and civilisation through successive stages with sufficient closeness to reality to be able, not only to interpret the preceding stages, but to give some indication of the future course of human social development. The proof of this has been established, not by the assertion of the claim, but by experience.

Historical Proof of Marxism

Last month, on the occasion of the ninetieth anniversary of the death of Marx, we wrote under the title 'Nine Decades of Vindication of Marxism':

The experience of these nine decades has demonstrated the continuous and accelerating fulfilment of his vision of the future course of world development in the greatest transformation in human history: the transformation from the old class society of exploitation and national oppression to the new future to be won by the victory of the working class revolution (with even in his last years the perception of the coming role of Russia as 'the vanguard of revolutionary action in Europe', in the 1880 preface of Marx and Engels to the *Communist Manifesto*), carrying out the construction of socialism as the foundation for the advance to communism, building the alliance of the peoples and opening the way to the future society of human brotherhood over the entire planet.

This outline of the future development of human society thus indicated by Marxism, and only by Marxism at that time, depicting the general course of the transformation of society during the ensuing century, has received significant confirmation in the reality of these years through which we have lived. Not in the sense of predicting the detailed events and particular forms in which the general development would take place; this would be to relegate Marx to the category of soothsayers and astrologers. Experience has

been far more complex and full of unexpected turns and problems than could be predicted in any broad general outline. Marx and Engels always emphasised the importance of the role of 'accidents' which could not be assessed beforehand in the course of historical development, including the important role of the character of individuals in leading positions. But at the same time they indicated how in the long run these accidents tended to balance one another and in the final outcome did not divert the main general line of development. The strength of Marxism as a guide and compass for interpreting and mastering the real world lies precisely in the fact that it is not a dead dogma enshrined in a glass case, but a living scientific theory of the real world, ceaselessly developing with the development of the real world.

Engels on the First World War

A signal demonstration of the strength of insight on the basis of Marxism to be able, not only to interpret past and present conditions, but to judge and formulate future possibilities and prospects, was the formulation by Engels a quarter of a century before the war of 1914 depicting the prospect of such a world war and its outcome in working class revolution. He wrote on December 15, 1887, on the prospect of

a world war of an extent and violence never before imagined. Eight to ten million soldiers will be slaughtering one another and ravaging all Europe. . . . The devastation of the Thirty Years War compressed into three to four years, and spread over the whole continent. Hopeless disorganisation of trade, industry and credit, ending in general bankruptcy . . . collapse of old states, and crowns rolling about in dozens on street pavements. . . . One result is absolutely certain: universal exhaustion and the creation of conditions for the final victory of the working class. This is the prospect if the extreme intensification of the present system of ever-rising mutual rivalry in war preparations finally brings its inevitable fruits. To this, my lords, princes and statesmen, you in your wisdom have brought old Europe. And if you have no recourse left but to begin the final mighty dance of war, we can face it. The war may possibly for the moment drive us into the background, and wrest from us many positions we had previously won. But if you have unloosed forces which you can no longer bring back under control, then, come what may, the end of the tragedy will see you ruined and the victory of the proletariat either already won or inevitable.

(Marx-Engels *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, pp. 350-51)

A powerful demonstration of insight written a quarter of a century before the first world war.

More on the First World War

Again in his *Socialism in Germany*, written in October 1891, and completed in January 1892 (published in *Neue Zeit*) Engels wrote:

The socialists in all countries are for peace. If, nevertheless, war comes, then one thing is certain. This war, where fifteen and twenty million armed men would slaughter one another, and lay waste to Europe as never before, this war must either bring about the immediate victory of socialism or so shatter the old order of things from top to bottom, and leave behind such a heap of ruins, that the old capitalist society will become more impossible than ever before, and the social revolution, though it might be set back for ten or fifteen years, would, however, in this case also have to conquer and in so much the more speedy and thorough fashion.

No parallel could be found for such an insight into prospects of future historical development, not as the proclamation of some abstract general formula, but with closeness to concrete facts and cautious recognition of unknown factors, as this analysis by Engels, which today, in the light of the known historical outcome, demonstrates the strength of Marxist theory in the hands of a master.

Bankruptcy of Pre-Marxist History

Arnold Toynbee, universally recognised as the most distinguished of present-day academic non-Marxist historians, in his twelve-volume work *A Study of History* wrote of 'the mysterious power of Providence which dictates the course of history.' Thus the foremost representative today of non-Marxist history finally takes refuge in 'mystery', like the mumbo-jumbo of primitive man, where 'Providence' is 'the power' which 'dictates the course of history.' In contrast to this subjective helplessness, Lenin emphasised from the outset, as in his polemic against the subjective idealist conceptions of the Narodniks in 1894, that the materialist conception of history 'for the first time made a *scientific* sociology possible,' because 'only the reduction of social relations to production relations, and of the latter to the level of the productive forces, provided a firm basis for the conception that the development of formations of society is a process of natural history' (*Collected Works*, Vol. 1, pp. 140-41). In his polemic against Bogdanov in *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism* in 1908, Lenin exposed the 'sterile' and 'scholastic' character of endeavouring to impose arbitrary subjective conceptions to measure social phenomena: 'Nothing is easier than to tack an "energeticist" or "biologico-sociological" label on to such phenomena as crises, revolutions, the class struggle and so forth; but neither

is there anything more sterile, more scholastic and lifeless than such an occupation' (*Collected Works*, Vol. 14, p. 328). This does not mean that the weapon of the scientific theory of social development, which finds expression in the materialist conception of history, is equivalent to a kind of fatalism or economic determinism, such as would exclude the active role of human beings, their consciousness, personality and ideas. On the contrary, the relations of production find their expression in classes, the conflict of classes, the consciousness and activity of human beings, and the ideas arising from these social conditions, ideas which prove progressive or reactionary according as they promote or obstruct the historical development of society. It was with this understanding that Marx said that ideas, when they take possession of the masses, become a material force.

Theory of a Changing Society

So far from presenting their theory, which for the first time opened the way to a scientific approach to the problems of social and historical development, as a final ready-made formula and solution of all problems, Marx and Engels always insisted that on the basis of this scientific theory the main work had still to be done. When Engels in his *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific*, said: 'These two great discoveries, the materialist conception of history and the revelation of the secret of capitalist production through surplus-value, we owe to Marx. With these discoveries socialism became a science', he at once proceeded to add: 'The next thing was to work out all its details and relations.' Similarly Engels in his letter to Konrad Schmidt on August 5, 1890, wrote:

Our conception of history is above all a guide to study, not a lever for construction after the manner of the Hegelians. All history must be studied afresh, the conditions of existence of the different formations of society must be individually examined before the attempt is made to deduce from them the political civil-legal, aesthetic, philosophic, religious, etc., notions corresponding to them. Only a little has been done here up to now.

Thus, so far from presenting the Marxist theory of historical development as a final solution of historical problems, Engels was insisting, over half a century after the *Communist Manifesto*, that the main work was still to be done.

Historical Tasks in the Modern Revolutionary Era

How much more so is this true today, in the era of the tremendous new historical development of the revolutionary transformation of

society: the general crisis of capitalism; the two world wars; the first victory of the working class revolution; the explosion of the old colonial empires; the construction of socialism, as the first stage of development of the new society preparing the foundations for the advance to communism; and the extension of socialism over one-third of the world. Historical treatment of these dynamic events, changing the world, requires more than ever the weapon of Marxist theory, equally for understanding their true character and for drawing the lessons. Nothing more powerfully demonstrates the inadequacy of the non-Marxist historical approach at the present time, even among its ablest practitioners, to assess with accuracy the events and governing forces of our revolutionary epoch.

Test of Practice

This is not a question of judging historical works by a label, whether the writers are Marxist or non-Marxist. Historians committed to acceptance of the principles of Marxism may in some cases have produced works of more limited value. Valuable work in a variety of fields has been done by non-Marxist historians. What is in question is the adequacy and accuracy of historical judgement when it comes to handling the major issues of our epoch of the revolutionary transformation of society. For the purpose of judging this we do not need to base our judgement on the handling of the issues of the world socialist revolution or the construction of socialism, since these constitute inevitably less familiar ground for non-Marxist historians, although in practice abundantly treated by them, usually not without plenty of bile, rancour and partisanship. Let us rather consider the handling of the main lines of policy of the Western Powers since 1918, through Versailles, Locarno, 'appeasement' and Munich, which led up to the second world war; or in the field of ideology, the cold war. It is here no less than in the direct issues of socialism that historical judgement requires social-political understanding.

A. J. P. Taylor as Historian

In his book, *Origins of the Second World War*, published in 1961, A. J. P. Taylor wrote as his final judgement: 'A story without heroes, and possibly even without villains'; 'many were guilty, none was innocent.' The Hoare-Laval Pact, which played into the hands of Mussolini, was described as 'a perfectly sensible plan'; and Munich as 'a triumph for all that was best and most enlightened in British

life.' Controversial views? Even deliberately provocative views? Certainly. A man has a right to his opinions. But simultaneously A. J. P. Taylor is proclaimed as 'one of England's two or three outstanding historians' (*Times Literary Supplement*, April 21, 1961). 'There are few historians whose European comprehension and mastery of detail enable them to see a history as a whole. Mr Taylor is one of those few' (*Listener* on his previous work, *From Napoleon to Stalin*). Plenty of controversy was aroused by his account of the origins of the second world war, also in the conventional standard organs, but always in these with accompanying unanimous tributes to his eminence as a historian, his unique knowledge, accuracy and mastery of facts.

Historian or Time-Server?

What was less often mentioned in these commentaries was that Taylor had already written a book on the theme of the background of the second world war, sixteen years earlier, under the title *The Course of German History*, published in 1945. In this book he reflected what was then the official view of German war guilt, and carried it to the extreme position made familiar by Vansittart and current official anti-German war propaganda, and indeed also expressed in the demands of the leaders of Anglo-American imperialism for the dismemberment and de-industrialisation of Germany, to condemn all Germans as guilty. This was in opposition to the democratic anti-fascist line, voiced by the Soviet Union, which made a distinction between the reactionary forces backed and maintained by German monopoly capitalism to deceive, corrupt, brutalise or terrorise the backward masses of the German people, as against the small, but heroic, resistance movement to whose continuing struggle the reports of Allen Dulles from Switzerland bore witness. Sixteen years later, by 1961, Western official policy had switched full circle, built up alliance with the reactionary forces of German monopoly capitalism which had backed Nazism, and rearmed West Germany on this basis as a member of a military anti-Soviet bloc. By this date Taylor's new book on the second world war also switched full circle, repudiated the theory of a special German war guilt, and even denied that Hitler had planned German expansion and domination of Europe, on the grounds that there was no fixed timetable beforehand. It is always possible for a serious historian to revise his judgement. But this record suggests not so much the responsible approach of a serious historian as the agility of a quick-change artist to respond to successive changing currents of official policy.

Mythology versus History

The penalty of this cavalier method of approaching history is that every philistine myth which has been circulated to hide the real issues is accepted at face value. The origin of the first world war is ascribed to Germany's violating Belgian neutrality ('The German refusal to respect the neutrality of Belgium provoked Great Britain to declare war on Germany,' p. 19), when in fact this rag of excuse was desperately seized by Grey to cover his real policy, after his ten years of strategic preparation of the war, and after the British and French navies had already taken up their agreed positions for the war. The Soviet leaders 'staked all on international revolution' (p. 36), when Lenin said in his *Report on War or Peace* in March 1918: 'Yes, we will see the international world revolution, but for the time being it is a very good fairy tale—I quite understand children like beautiful fairy tales. But I ask, is it becoming for a serious revolutionary to believe fairy tales?' Germany in 1918 was 'defeated without Russian assistance' (p. 21), when the victorious socialist revolution in Russia in 1917 opened the way to the 1918 revolution in Germany, which brought to an end the fighting in the West at the very moment when the Western military chiefs were preparing their offensive for 1919. The 'hysterical relief' and applause of parliament over Chamberlain's journey to Munich is duly recorded, but not the significant historical fact of the single voice of opposition from William Gallacher: 'I am no party to this; I object to the sacrifice of Czechoslovakia.' 'Against all expectation Hitler found himself at war with the Western powers before he had conquered the East' (p. 70), when precisely this prospect was predicted from the platform at the Communist Party Congress at the moment of Munich in 1938. The riot of glaring self-contradictions on successive pages is endless, and has been pointed out by many commentators. The main value of Taylor's book on the second world war is the negative value of demonstrating the loss of bearings of even the most ingenious and agile intellect among non-Marxist historians to chart a way in the great issues of the modern epoch without the compass of a scientific social theory represented by Marxism.

Academic Cold Warrior

In the field of ideology a less prominent academic historian than Taylor, although also with a considerable record, David Caute, has published this year a book under the title *The Fellow Travellers**, which normally, in view of its amateurish inaccuracies and lack of

* *The Fellow Travellers*, David Caute. Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 434pp, £5.75

knowledge, might have been judged not worthy of any close attention, had not the universal blast of top-feature publicity in all the standard conventional organs on the day of publication revealed that this sophisticated dilution of MacCarthyism for a British public was being enthusiastically taken up as a shot in the cold war, posing as history. The glaring and often comic inaccuracies through lack of knowledge, such as the description of the position of 'King's Counsellor' as 'a high and remunerative honour', or the mixing up of Edgar Young and Edgar Snow, are only symptoms. What is important is the brain-washing revealed equally in the book and in its reception by the general press. Here was one of the greatest struggles of human history, when the rulers of Western imperialism performed a criminal role to build up, equip and finance fascism, and connive at its aggression as the weapon to strangle the advance of the working class, democracy and socialism. Fascism built up its fifth column in every country of capitalism and established close connections with high ruling circles. Numbers of independent spirits in every country to their honour fought against these policies and represented the struggle of mankind against fascism—'premature anti-fascists' as they were subsequently called when official policy changed. They were international. The International Brigade was international. Many gave their lives. They included communists, militant trade unionists, Labour Party members, non-party workers, progressive intellectuals. One country where fascism failed to penetrate and build its fifth column was the country of socialism. The Soviet Union, at the same time as consistently striving for unity of the peoples to save peace from fascist aggression, went through the harshest ordeal to build up the strength to meet the onslaught of fascism and to prevent fascist penetration. The costs were heavy. But the job was done. The strength of the Soviet Union, in unity with the finally awakened strength of the peoples of the world, saved mankind from fascist slavery.

Turning History Upside Down

In this epic struggle of our era, this author, in place of indicting the real criminals, presents an elaborate dossier, like an FBI prosecutor, of all those who to their honour fought alongside the communist vanguard in the common struggle against fascism and the reactionary policies of their governments. Turning history upside down, he describes these independent spirits who refused to bow the knee to reactionary policies of their governments, often incurring consequent pains and penalties, in a familiar police jargon

type of formula, drawn originally from very different contexts, as 'fellow travellers' of the Soviet Union or communism. In this category he includes, not only individuals who may have subsequently travelled other political paths, but also tried and trusted champions of the people like D. N. Pritt, whose record of indomitable political courage and integrity, and tireless battles in the courts on behalf of the peoples and victims of oppression in countries all over the world made him loved and honoured as one of the true heroes of our era who will be remembered long after many of his opponents are forgotten.

Time to Learn the Lesson

The present time makes it more necessary than ever to learn the lessons of history. A new world situation is opening. The conceptions inherited from the cold war have still to be overcome. The opportunities for new relations of co-operation of the peoples which have developed with the present negotiations in Helsinki and Vienna; the preparations for a European Security Conference; the electoral success of Chancellor Brandt and the recognition of the German Democratic Republic; and the visits of General Secretary Brezhnev to the Western capitals this summer: all these are opening the most favourable opportunities since the end of the second world war to promote international co-operation and win new advance of the peoples in every country. At this moment it is more than ever necessary to learn the lessons of history of the preceding period and discard the relics of the cold war conceptions which are still being given wide currency.

R.P.D.

LABOUR MONTHLY

FIFTY YEARS AGO

The Labour Party is now accepted as the next government of this country. It is accepted by the other parliamentary parties, by the civil service, and by the Court. It has become the official opposition, His Majesty's Opposition, the alternative government. It is accepted by the press even when they fight against it. True, it may or may not win at the next election: there is many a slip 'twixt the cup and the lip.' But the actual fortunes of war are of less importance than the general acceptance of the idea of a Labour government in the near future. It is 'accepted'; that is the cardinal fact.

(From 'The Labour Party's Approach to Power',
by R. Page Arnot, *Labour Monthly*, June 1923)

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MOBILISATION AFTER MAY DAY

Eddie Marsden

General Secretary

Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers
Constructional Section

MAY Day 1973 has come and gone, but I am sure it will be remembered for many years to come for at least two very important reasons. Firstly because it is the first time for more than 50 years that May Day has been officially celebrated by the trade unions and labour movement on a working day on May 1. Secondly because the TUC has, hesitantly, in a stumbling half-hearted fashion—but has none the less—called on the trade union movement to stop work against the government's prices and incomes policy.

Both these aspects of this May Day demonstrate the political awakening of the working class and the loosening of the right-wing grip on the trade unions and Labour Party.

It was in 1890 that the Second International declared that May 1 (a day chosen by the American Federation of Labour) should be the day on which workers the world over should demonstrate their international unity and solidarity. The British trade union movement under right-wing leadership has notably refused to honour the decision and has continually held celebrations on the first Sunday in May, diluting the very meaning of the May 1 decision.

The last few months have also demonstrated that the lessons of trade union unity have not yet been learned by many on the general council of the TUC. Their disgraceful refusal to mobilise the whole of the movement behind the gas and hospital workers has allowed the government to take the trade unions on one at a time, magnifying the power of the government on the one hand, and contributing to a consequential loss of confidence in the trade union movement on the other.

The decision of the Special Congress on March 5, to hold a demonstration and stoppage of work on May 1, was the result of the continuing struggle against the Industrial Relations Act and the government's prices and incomes policy. In fact, the last two years have been a period of intense activity on all fronts with the highlights, in addition to the Industrial Relations Act, being the fight of the UCS workers and other workers, and the battle on rents with the demand for the freezing of the government's Housing Finance Act.

The right-wing on the general council of the TUC were in considerable difficulties, with their traditional control slipping away from them. The government's policy was no respecter of unions nor of union leaders, and many unions not normally recognised as militant were in the front line of the battle which left little room for right-wing manoeuvres.

This period has also seen the further growth of consolidation of left unity in the trade unions and on the general council of the TUC. The main anchor has been the continuing militant role of the AUEW which has been unrelenting in its opposition to the Industrial Relations Act and the National Industrial Relations Court, and has been the initiator of action by the TUC itself.

The decision for action at the Special Congress was the result of compromise by unions wanting the general council to organise a stoppage of work and to put some teeth into the general council report, and as usual this allowed some difference in interpretation which has been used by some leaders to sabotage the decision.

The scandalous behaviour of Frank Chapple of the EETPU (Electrical, Electronic, Telecommunication Union/Plumbing Trades Union) and Tom Jackson of the Post Office workers was supported in a rather less open fashion by others like the leaders of the National Union of Railwaymen; unfortunately the lack of instruction by some unions who generally supported action led to confusion amongst many trade unionists.

However, in spite of these difficulties, May 1, 1973, will be remembered as the day when the British working class movement returned to the traditions of the international working class movement and demonstrated in towns and cities throughout the country in their many thousands.

I personally participated in two demonstrations, the first in Warrington in the morning, and the second in Manchester in the afternoon. I understand it is the first time Warrington has marched on May Day, and the demonstration in Manchester was the best and most colourful for many years, with speakers from all sections of the movement on the platform.

The tremendous demonstration in many towns and cities together with the massive stoppage of work gives the lie to those including Heath who state that the government has won the battle on prices and incomes. The mass media, also propagating this line, are stating too that the government and certain trade union leaders are hoping to renew talks after the rank and file have let off their May 1 steam. A serious error of judgement is being made by trade union leaders,

including some on the left, in giving support to the idea of talks between the government and the trade unions today.

It is the government, desperate for a shoulder to lean on, that needs these discussions, not the unions, because, contrary to the government's statements, they have not won the battle on prices and incomes; nor have they solved the economic problems facing the country today. There is massive opposition to their present policies from very wide sections of the population, particularly from workers who will not accept a continuing curb on their right to negotiate realistic increases in wages.

Vic Feather was right when he said that May 1, 1973, was the beginning, not the end, to the protest on government interference in wage bargaining and the Industrial Relations Act. But this can only be true to the extent that the general council really carries out its duty by mobilising the movement in real opposition and not contemplating compromises that will only strengthen the government at the expense of the working class.

This is the message of May Day 1973 and workers everywhere must keep up their pressure, without which 'shabby' compromises become possible.

Dai Francis

General Secretary
National Union of Mineworkers
South Wales Area

THE confidence of the South Wales Area Executive Council in the rank and file membership was fully justified by their resounding eight-to-one vote in favour of strike action. All the 50 pits in which we have 30,000 members were closed down, and in other industries in South Wales over a quarter of a million workers were on strike. Miners, along with transport workers, engineers, building workers, railwaymen, loco drivers, steel workers, hospital workers and shop workers, in a demonstration 9,700 strong, marched through the streets of the capital city, Cardiff. May Day coincided with the Area Annual Conference of the South Wales Miners, and the delegates took a day off to attend the demonstration.

The demonstration, one of the most united and largest in recent years, was a rebuff for those faint-hearted Welsh trade union leaders who had made every effort to play down and weaken the TUC's strike call. The unity and the numbers involved in the demonstration and strike action made May Day splendid and heroic in every way.

Its success was achieved in the teeth of a fierce campaign against it by the mass media, and the disgraceful actions of the right-wing leaders to hold it back.

May Day in Wales was only a stage in the struggle against government policy which was decided at the Special TUC in March, and the delegates who attended were lobbied by hundreds of South Wales miners.

This united demonstration must be followed by stepping up the fight in every way possible, including industrial action, and steps towards this end must be taken immediately by cutting down on overtime work as proposed by the TUC. We must continue to expose the fraudulent incomes policy; the attack on the trade union movement must be smashed. The Industrial Relations Act must be removed, along with the Tory government.

John Reidford

Secretary
Glasgow District Trades Council

MAY DAY 1973 saw Glasgow working class understanding at its best, in realising that they should be seen as well as being heard in opposing government policies. Our expectations of numbers attending had been based on possible transport difficulties for demonstrators coming in from suburban areas. In the preceding weeks we had therefore planned that all organisational details should be communicated to district committee, branch committee and shop floor level, in order that trade unionists understood the reasons for action to be taken on this May Day, and two hundred thousand informative leaflets were distributed.

This basic organisation coupled with a mass shop stewards' meeting paid dividends, and we almost trebled our expected numbers at the Glasgow May Day demonstration. Tory press and TV reports and government distortions of response would and could not report this fact for obvious reasons. It is worth reporting that the small Scottish highland town of Fort William had a demonstration of 400 people, out of a catchment area of only ten thousand people, which in itself reflects the concern of the people at government policies.

In Glasgow our demonstration of 15,000 indicated in a quiet and correct way that they intended to use George Square for their meeting and not the alternative of Cochrane Street as City authorities had requested. It is to the credit of the senior police officials that they

appraised the situation and accepted the mood of the demonstration, and allowed the meeting to take place without any heavy handling of the situation. William McLean, General Secretary of the Mineworkers' Scottish Area, made an impressive and direct speech to the assembled demonstrators which was enthusiastically received.

This May Day has shown that given the proper leadership trade unionists will respond, and this is reflected in the Scottish demonstrators' figures which are higher in proportion than the rest of the country. This was due to the clear-cut directive of the Scottish Trades Union Congress in comparison to the BTUC request.

It is essential that we must build on this display of working class solidarity if we intend to oppose Phases Two and Three of the government's pay policies. We regret that certain trade union leadership did not accept the collective decision of the March Special Congress, and we can only hope that they too will recognise the response on this historic May Day, which can only be a milestone to a socialist system of society.

Beryl Huffinley*

Secretary
Leeds Trades Council

THE situation following May Day asks questions of us all based on our recent experiences in campaigning—what next, how soon and to what extent will the whole movement be involved in following through a continuous and mounting campaign? The TUC emphasised in its literature that May Day was only part of such a campaign, and yet have not presented concrete immediate objectives (beyond saying they will talk to Heath again under certain circumstances) as a follow on.

To anyone at the Special Congress, the decision that gave rise to May Day 1973 was as a result of leadership from below. The intervening period was not used to mount a national campaign led by the TUC, but rather an interval in which to negate much of the feeling expressed in March, so that again it depended on local leadership to bring about the results achieved.

In areas such as ours where every campaign requires 150 per cent sheer hard work to achieve a 60 per cent success the results were nonetheless inspiring, proving that if the whole movement

* Beryl Huffinley is President of the Yorkshire Federation of Trades Councils. She is also a member of the No. 9 Regional Committee of the Transport and General Workers' Union.

had been involved from top to bottom a complete national stoppage would have taken place. As it was and is, having raised the movement to this level we must keep the pressure up, for during the campaigning much valuable education was done. Our experiences were mixed: the dockers, engineers, railwaymen and some sections of the building workers were solid. The Yorkshire miners were more a mixed bag, but overall a majority of the pits were completely out. Passenger transport regrettably was a very weak link in nearly every city.

The question constantly asked was and is 'What good will one day do?' Who said it was only one day, for all time? It must be the first 'one day', but what good it will do has to be answered over and over again, as part of the necessary understanding required to continue and lift the campaign. The 'one day' is past, and in spite of the weaknesses it was a 'great day' and everyone involved has come out of it a little changed from their experience.

Trades councils did a magnificent job in giving leadership and in co-ordinating activities; their role in the future must be more widely recognised and supported. They represent the articulate grass-roots level of organisation, and from the first day of protest against the Industrial Relations Act on December 8, their role and identity has expanded. The recent proposals of the TUC with regard to the future of trades councils must recognise and provide for their expansion and status. They should include shop steward representation on an official and recognised basis. These two, representing factory and shop organisation as well as official branch organisation, can provide the springboard, the forum, and the organisation in every locality for future action. Regional Advisory Committees of the TUC have given little or no leadership in any area. Their involvement in the struggle has been almost non-existent and would appear to be expendable without any loss to the movement.

Surely between now and September, having had this great experience, the TUC must call for a series of actions. Prices, rents, the continued implementation of Phase Two, and Phase Three in the offing, demand it on a national basis. The Equal Pay Act should be a serious issue around which to organise industrial action locally and nationally. The gas men, the civil servants and the hospital ancillary workers confirm that a union involved in struggle must be able to have the full strength of all unions behind it. We have laid a base for this conception being accepted at local level: why not at national level? Unions, and that means members, must also realise that union rule books were devised to strengthen their unions

and must not be used to bind it in chains in the situation we are in at the present time. A start has been made on the understanding of the need for industrial action to defeat pernicious political measures. We have come some way in achieving that understanding, but more needs to be done, if the base laid is to grow sufficiently to defeat our enemies both outside and within our ranks.

Simon Fraser

Secretary
Liverpool Trades Council

LIVERPOOL, unlike many other parts of the country, still retains its desire for May 1 to be a workers' holiday, and a day of dedication. This year, May 1 landed in the middle of the Trades Council's 125th anniversary celebrations, and far from being an added burden to the Council it proved a boon. We had the largest procession for many years, with some 12,000 participating. It was also the most colourful, with pipe and brass bands.

Another interesting feature was the variety of unions participating. The dockers and building workers could not claim a preponderance as so often in the past. This was a demonstration of unity, with the docker, shipyard worker, tailors and garment workers, white collar worker, car worker, all marching together. This was a movement—brotherhood. It was Merseyside loyalty at its best.

The opening of the new pierhead speakers' platform added colour, as did the platform party. We had Jack Jones (Transport and General Workers' Union) as the principal speaker, Bill Crichton from the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Workers, Terry Harrison from the Trades Council and Jack Rogers from the builders. Fraternal greetings were from Mrs Alexandra Reksha, Secretary of the Odessa Trades Council, USSR; Heinz Hanns, President of Rostock Trades Council, GDR; and Hermann Sorensen, leader of the Kassel, West German, DGB delegation. To finalise the proceedings there was the amusing speech made by the Everyman Theatre actor playing the part of Enoch Powell in 'Tarzan's Last Stand', a new play commissioned by the building workers for the Trades Council's anniversary celebrations. This was indeed a brilliant note on which to finish the proceedings at the pierhead.

But it was not the finish of May Day yet, as thousands of workers walked to Williamson Square to hear the music being provided in the square as part of the celebrations. Many hundreds also took the opportunity of visiting the exhibition in the festival office of the arts

and crafts of Merseyside people. Five hundred paintings and sculptures were on view in what was the most exciting exhibition of its kind ever held in the city.

May Day in Liverpool 1973 was not just a day for dad; it was a family day. It was an insight into what May Day should be about, and it brought from the Merseysider all the humour and affection for which he is so rightly famous.

BOOMS, SLUMPS AND THE GENERAL CRISIS

John Purton*

THE Confederation of British Industry Survey was quoted in the *Financial Times* of May 4 as reporting 'Big output gains, record orders and export prospects.' However, there should be no illusions about the current improvement in the economic situation of British capitalism. It is a fact, of course, that unemployed numbers are falling, industrial production is rising and capitalist profits increasing. The US, Western Europe and Japan are experiencing a capitalist 'boom' and an alarming increase in the rate of world capitalist inflation.

However, economists like Samuel Brittan of the *Financial Times*, have already expressed concern about the next British recession. How soon will this be? It could happen before the end of the year, following a widely anticipated balance of payments crisis. Now, the Chancellor may be relying on the continued downward floating of the pound to stimulate exports. At some point, however, a falling pound would probably reduce world confidence in sterling enough to drive capital out of the country, causing a crisis resulting in the Chancellor braking the economy sharply.

How serious will the next recession be? That, in my view, depends on how closely it coincides with the world recession that is bound to follow the 'boom', on how closely it fits in with the powerfully growing underlying contradictions and conflicts of world monopoly capitalism. For a long time after the war, capitalist governments firmly believed that a way had been found to smoothe out the cycle of booms and slumps, which has been going on ever since the industrial revolution of the nineteenth century. In the 1960s, the US, the greatest capitalist power, had eight and a half years of unchecked

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economic expansion. Then came the longest recession of the post-war era.

Since the war, the much greater intervention by capitalist states in the economy has modified the cyclical movement of capitalism from boom to slump, without abolishing it. Undoubtedly, the inflationary expenditure on the Vietnam war contributed powerfully to the long 'boom' of American monopoly capitalism in the 1960s, but without preventing a recession in the end. In the case of Britain, the stop-go activities of governments have caused a series of short-lived 'booms' and rapidly recurring 'slumps'.

Stop-go has been connected with a whole series of balance of payments crises. Whenever the 'import' bill exceeds the 'export' earnings by too much, the alarm signal goes, capital flows out of London and the value of the pound is forced down. The government slams on the economic brakes, cutting down demand for imports and for goods that might be exported; it hopes for a return of capital to London, by restoring confidence among the world's capitalists that the balance of payments is all right, to be followed by releasing the brakes on economic expansion until the next crisis.

Britain has been especially subject to these crises for several reasons: her large military expenditure and her large exports of capital, which both reduce investment at home in increasing productivity; her lack of some of the special factors which fostered economic expansion in other countries; the vulnerability of London to pressures on the pound, arising out of the financial operations of the City, and the use of London as an international financial centre.

Both the cycle of booms and slumps, modified by state capitalist economic management, and the general deepening crisis, in which world monopoly capitalism now finds itself, are to be understood only with the help of the Marxist analysis of monopoly capitalism. The driving force of capitalism is the competitive accumulation of capital by the amassing of profits. Capitalists who cannot accumulate go to the wall. This is ever more true. The growing scale of modern industry, necessitated by modern technology, incessantly increases the concentration of production and capital, and enlarges the size of the monopolistic multi-national business corporations. Capital accumulation amasses profits, but at the same time causes slumps. The more capital there is, the greater the capital outlay on which a sufficient rate of profit has to be made; also, the more difficult it becomes to sell the increasing output, in markets limited by the purchasing power of the exploited workers and of the peoples exploited by neo-colonialism.

Every few years, in the history of industrial capitalism, this problem was solved temporarily for some of the capitalists by a slump and mass unemployment. This reduced the amount of competing capital and lowered wages, thus restoring the rate of profit on the remaining capital and starting a new boom in capital investment. State management of monopoly capitalism has not eliminated this underlying tendency, but only modified it. There are still booms and slumps.

Now consider the present 'boom' in the context of the whole development of monopoly capitalism since the war.

Two ways to maintain the rate of profit are to advance technology and productivity, and to increase the exploitation of labour. These key factors help to explain both the rapid expansion of monopoly capital since the war and the recent development of a deepening inflationary crisis. Under the umbrella of the dominant US economy, with its huge overseas capital investments and its stable dollar, capitalist Japan and Western Europe advanced rapidly to make up the technological gap between them and the US, with plenty of scope for raising productivity. They profited from large supplies of relatively cheap labour, the real wages of which were kept down by an at first creeping, then an accelerating, inflation.

Now that this gap in technology and capital investment has been much reduced, now that the immediate sources of cheap labour are drying up, Japan, Western Europe and the US are thrown into ever-sharpening rivalry for markets, materials and investments. Since the mid-1960s, there has consequently been an acceleration in world capitalist investment, in the rival drive for profit. But this only makes the crisis worse. It increases world capitalist inflation, with its pressure on world resources of labour and materials and its break-neck expansion of bank credit for capital investment. The collapse of the dollar-dominated world monetary system only heralds a more fundamental crisis. Thus, British monopoly capitalism faces not only its own recession, but also world recession following on the present boom, and a deepening general crisis of world monopoly capitalism.

The British capitalists and their government will try to work their way out of this by the use of increasingly dictatorial economic and political controls, at the expense of the working people. The only alternative to the continued crisis of capitalism, with the possibility of mass unemployment, poverty and oppression, is the road to socialism, by way of a united struggle for living standards and democracy, illuminated by the theory of Marxism. Its study and application to present problems is a most urgent task for us all.

PORTUGAL—REPRESSION AND RESISTANCE

José Pina*

IT has been officially announced that Prince Philip will visit Portugal on June 8 and that Caetano, the chief of the Portuguese fascist Government, will visit London from July 16 to 19. These visits are planned as part of the celebrations marking the six hundredth anniversary of the treaty of alliance between England and Portugal; in the context of the present political situation in the two countries, they acquire a special and disturbing meaning.

Portugal is approximately one-third of the size of Britain; but Portugal's African colonies—Angola, Mozambique and Guiné—make up the largest remaining old-style colonial empire in the world, with a combined area larger than Britain, France, West Germany and Italy put together, and with an enormous wealth of natural resources.

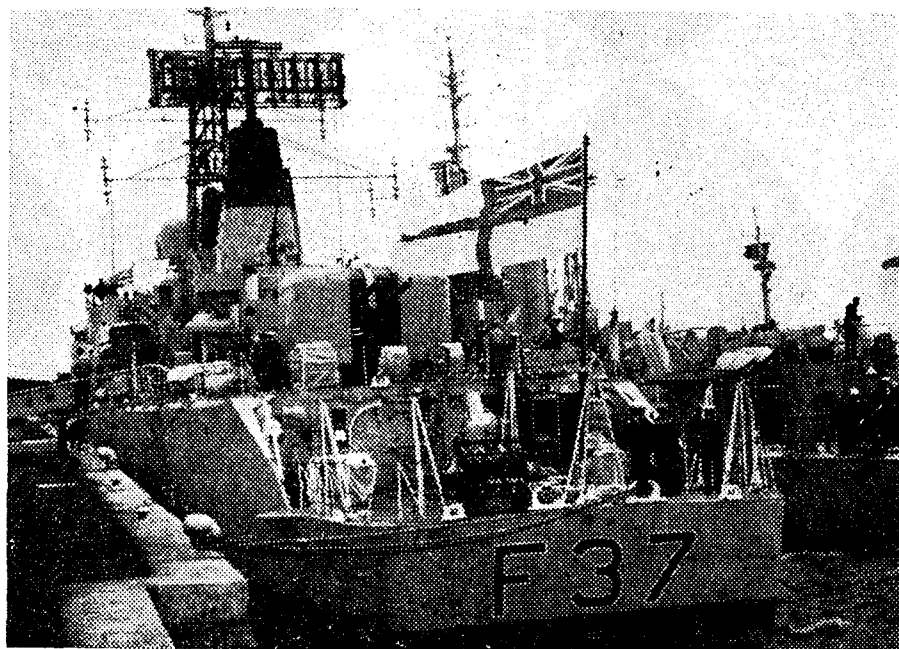
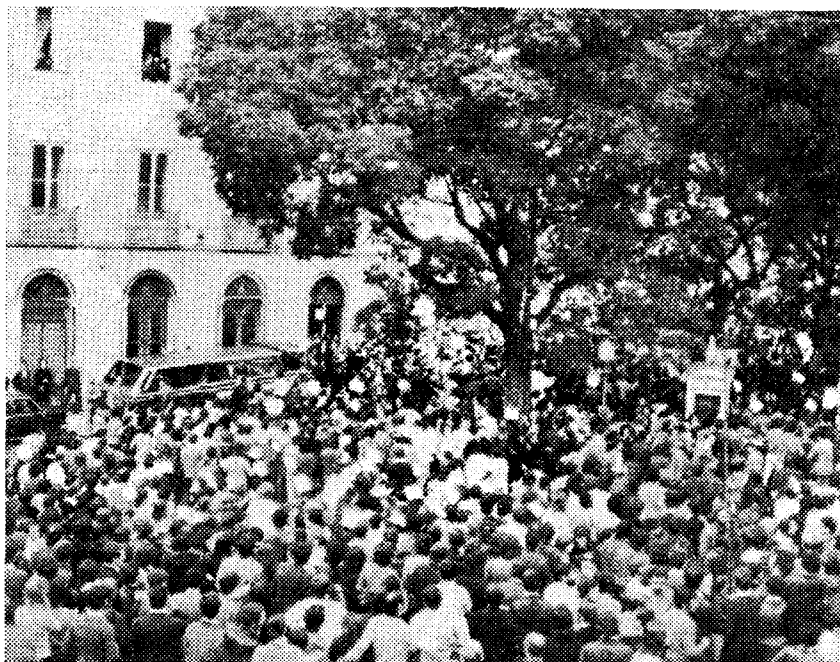
Portugal's population is approximately nine million, or less than one-fifth of that of Britain. Two million Portuguese live abroad as immigrants, mainly in France, Brazil, the United States and West Germany. And the Portuguese language is spoken today by over one hundred million people, including ninety million in Brazil, once a Portuguese colony.

The treaty of alliance with England was signed at a time when Portugal was beginning a period of intensive social development as a trading and sea-going nation, which put her in the forefront of the European countries for the next two hundred years. The Anglo-Portuguese alliance was then of mutual advantage but, after the decline of Portugal and her empire in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the 'alliance' became simply a way of keeping Portugal and her colonies as British protectorates, as markets for English manufactured goods, as suppliers of either agricultural products or raw materials, as strategic points on the sea routes to the British Empire or in relation to the rest of Europe, and, since the nineteenth century, as growing fields for British investments.

Portugal is today the oldest fascist dictatorship the world has

(continued on page 266)

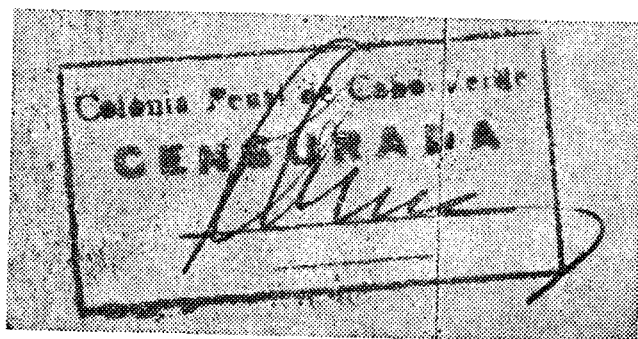
* J. Pina is the pen-name of a rank and file militant of the Portuguese Communist Party; a member of 26 years standing, he has worked both in Portugal and abroad.





Portugal—demonstrators take over the streets: the photographer defied police detection. And from the Lisbon newspaper *O Primeiro de Janeiro*, May 1, 1973: two ships of the Royal Navy flotilla (see p. 268).

Tarrafal, Cape Verde, December 15, 1952—letter from Fernando (see p. 269). The back of the envelope carries the censor's stamp shown below. Fernando wrote: 'Our best wish is that the New Year should carry new great expansions to *Labour Monthly* and a sound peace in a wide liberty to all peoples. . . .'



(continued from page 263)

ever known. In 1926 a military coup ended a brief period of bourgeois republican parliamentary rule, and established a fascist corporative regime, on the model of Mussolini's Italy. It had close ties, later, with Hitler's Germany and Franco's Spain. The British government of the time—which continued to have a commanding influence in Portuguese internal affairs—did nothing to prevent this, and kept the alliance in full operation, giving economic and military support to the Portuguese fascists, who, in turn, contributed later to the overthrow of the Spanish Republic, and helped the Nazis during the second world war, at the same time playing a double game with the allies: this eventually led to Portugal becoming a recipient of Marshall aid—and a full founder member of Nato. American, West German, French, British and Nato military bases were established in Portugal after the second world war, with the active encouragement of the fierce anti-Sovietism and anti-Communism of the Portuguese regime. Economic interests from those countries had a share in exploiting the cheap labour and the natural resources of Portugal and her colonies.

Although there are no recent official data about British investments in Portugal and the Portuguese colonies, an estimate of three hundred million pounds is probably not far from the truth. Amongst the big British firms with investments there, are Plessey, Leyland, ICI, Unilever, BICC, Tanganyika Concessions, Coates Patons, Cable & Wireless, Rio Tinto, Reckitt & Colman, Charter Consolidated, Sena Sugar, Lisbon Tramways, Allied Brewers, Beecham, British Oxygen, Rank, Burroughs & Wellcome, Hill Samuel, Lazard Bros and Barclays Bank. Portuguese workers' wages average one-quarter of those in Britain, and near-slave conditions prevail for the African workers. This, plus the fact that prices are only slightly lower than those in Britain, explains the investment rush.

As a result of having her industrial development stunted by Britain and of thus having to retain outdated social, political and economic structures, with a colonial empire mainly benefiting others, Portugal today has the lowest standard of living and the lowest gross national product per head of population anywhere in western Europe.

According to the latest figures available, out of a total population of 8,889,392 there were 3,515,639 in active employment. Of these there were 1,445,017 (43.6 per cent) in the primary sector (agriculture, fishing), 944,271 (28.6 per cent) in the second sector (manufacturing, mining and building industries) and 905,065 (27.2 per cent) in the

third sector (transport, communications, distribution and other services).

Although the largest number of employed people are still in agriculture, their contribution to the gross national product is the lowest (approximately 24 per cent of the total GNP). Industrial workers, the second largest group, make the highest contribution (nearly 40 per cent). Portuguese industrial workers are therefore in a leading position amongst the social forces in Portugal, their interests being in common with employees in the third sector, together with the many thousands of agricultural workers, small peasants and nearly forty thousand fishermen.

The Portuguese regime is based on an alliance between a small number of large, privately-owned, national industrial monopolies, the big banks, the dwindling, but still influential, big landowners, and the powerful foreign economic interests in Portugal and her colonies.

The Portuguese corporative state is based on the operation of separate employers' and employees' state-run organisations, which must 'work in harmony', avoiding all class struggles and 'social conflict', much like, though in less ruthless form, proposals frequently made in Britain and elsewhere. Industrial workers and employees are organised in state unions or *sindicatos*, and the employers in state organisations called *grémios*.

In 1965 there were 324 *sindicatos* with 1,249,615 members. The *sindicatos* can be organised only with government approval, and their elected leaderships are still very much subjected to control by the government, which has powers to wind up a *sindicato* or to ban any leadership. No one who is known to have ideas contrary to the established order (that is, ideas against fascism or 'subversive ideas') or who has been deprived of political rights (by being tried for opposition to the regime) can be elected to the leadership of a *sindicato*.

'Interruption of economic activities' is punishable by law, and force can be used by the authorities to make strikers work. When public services are affected, strikers can be dismissed and prosecuted. Anybody inciting, favouring or organising strike action can be punished with two to eight years in jail. A ruthless and extremely well-organised secret police (the DGS-PIDE), with thousands of paid informers, backed by two heavily-armed regular police forces and by the well-equipped Portuguese army—trained in colonial wars and with plenty of Nato-supplied weapons—keep a constant watch on the workers. A nationally-based light weapons and ammunitions industry—financed and backed by West Germany—joins with

foreign-owned electronics and motor vehicles industrial units in the country to support an impressive force of repression in Portugal and her colonies.

(A second article by José Pina will appear in our July issue, under the title 'Portugal—Advancing Struggle'—Ed. LM)

Anglo-Portuguese Alliance: Diary for Protest

April 27, Lisbon. Luncheon arranged by Anglo-Portuguese Chamber of Trade, presided over by its President, Franco Nogueira, lately foreign minister under Salazar. In the presence of the British Ambassador, Sir David Muirhead (recently returned from Guiné where he saw the Portuguese CO, General Spínola, who is likely to know more than most people about the murder of Amílcar Cabral), the main speaker, Mr C. L. S. Cope, Director of Foreign Relations of the Confederation of British Industry, referred to the need to reinforce the existing Committee for Anglo-Portuguese Industrial Co-operation. He announced a conference to be held in London, under the auspices of the CBI and its opposite number, the Portuguese Industry Association.

April 30—May 4, Lisbon. 'A flotilla of the Royal Navy has anchored at Lisbon to take part in the celebration of the 600th anniversary of the Anglo-Portuguese alliance. It comprises the cruiser flagship "Glamorgan", the frigates "Jaguar" and "Hardy" and the supply vessel "Regent". The flotilla is under the command of Admiral R. P. Clayton' (*Times*, May 1, 1973). The British visitors were in Lisbon on May Day when demonstrations took place in the town centre with violent clashes between police and demonstrators. At least 14 people were injured. Demonstrations were successfully held in Oporto and other Portuguese towns.

May 5—June 23, London. BBC broadcasts to Portugal each Sunday on the subject of the alliance. Speakers are: Professor H. Livermore (associated with SNI, the Portuguese government information department), Professor Peter Russell (Oxford), Professor Virginia Rau (Lisbon Faculty of Letters), Professor Charles Boxer (London University, retired), Mr A. D. Francis (ex-diplomat), Mr Michael Glover (military historian), Professor D. L. Wheeler (New Hampshire, US) and Mr Hugh Kay (journalist, *Catholic Herald*). The head of the BBC's Portuguese section is Mr Naller (telephone 01-240 3456, or write Bush House, Aldwych, London WC2).

June 5-8. Prince Philip's visit to Portugal, planned in spite of Joan Lestor's intervention in the Lower House.

June 11—July 22, London. British Museum summer exhibition to commemorate 'the longest friendship between two countries in the world' (BM notice). This exhibition will be in the Bible Room of the Department of Manuscripts (BM, Bloomsbury, London WC1; 01-636 1555; tube to Russell Square).

June 16. Anniversary of First Anglo-Portuguese Alliance, June 16, 1373.

July 16-19. Marcello Caetano to visit London. The visit to include a banquet with the Queen at Buckingham Palace.

August. Portuguese Navy training ship 'Sagres' to visit Britain; Frank Judd, MP for Portsmouth W, has already questioned the exchange of naval visits.

‘. . . AND GUILHERME’

Nicola Seyd

TURN to page 288, or to the fund page of any issue of *Labour Monthly* in the last 18 years, and there will be found recorded in our smallest type: ‘AMT for Fernando and Guilherme’. This is the form that one of our regular fund contributions has taken since November 1954; for a few months before that it was ‘AMT for Fernando’. But the story begins earlier with a group of Portuguese political prisoners in Tarrafal concentration camp* in the Cape Verde Islands, who were readers of a subscription copy of *Labour Monthly*. They appear successfully to have misled the prison authorities into believing *LM* to be a harmless English sociological text, emanating from respectable London, centre of colonial administration and practice.

The group was in correspondence with AMT (Angela Tuckett) in the *Labour Monthly* office at something more than the basic level of Christmas, New Year and birthday cards, though there were limitations to what could be put down on paper. Fernando was understood by Angela to be ‘the oldest inhabitant’, and wrote the letters and cards on behalf of the prisoners’ ‘university’—where they studied other things besides English. Eventually individual prisoners would reach the time of their trial, for which they would be sent back to a mainland prison.

That came finally to Fernando; and whilst he was on board the ship he wrote me a goodbye letter, having already explained that the *LM* subscription was always passed on to someone left behind. Later he was amnestied and wrote to say he had his freedom in Portugal.

The story of Fernando has to be left there; the name is not uncommon, and more than one Fernando has served time and endured torture in the prisons of Salazar and Caetano. Another of the ‘university’ group was Guilherme Carvalho, of whom our contributor José Pina writes a biographical note:

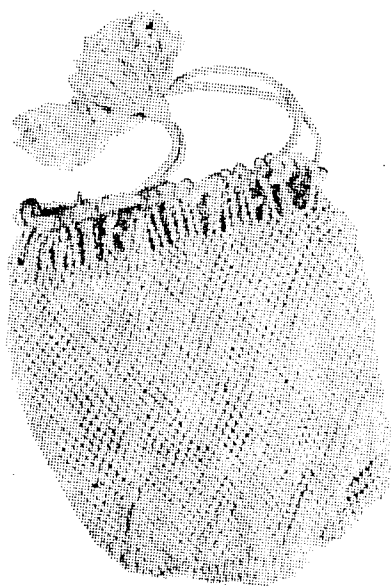
Guilherme da Costa Carvalho was born in 1921 in Oporto. He took part in anti-fascist activities as a student and had to give up his studies because of police harassment. In 1945 he joined the underground struggle of the Portu-

* The term ‘concentration camp’ requires explanation to readers who sense exaggeration. The official term used by the Portuguese authorities is ‘penal colony’, but those confined in Tarrafal have long testified to its identification with the concentration camps of Nazi Germany. It may be that ‘penal colony’, which is sufficient to horrify descendants of the Tolpuddle Martyrs, has a less formidable ring in Portuguese. Portuguese readers of this journal will certainly expect the correct usage of ‘concentration camp’.

guese Communist Party. He was arrested and badly tortured by the secret police in 1948, and he spent the next six years in different prisons, including the notorious Tarrafal concentration camp in the Cape Verde Islands, off the West African coast. He was released in 1954.

Angela relates an incident which must have occurred soon after:

One day came a terrific surprise: a message to meet someone in town. Suitable arrangements were made, and there in a car was . . . 'Fernando?'



'No, Guilherme!' It was hard to stop embracing. Then a present which was explained by a third party, in English to make sure the overtones were exactly conveyed.

After one of the *Labour Monthly* 'university' sessions, one of the 'students' had said: 'Look, one day we shall leave here. One day someone will get to London. Whoever it is will of course want to take a present from all of us. But what would be most suitable? Because we'd better plan it now.'

The present was a patterned string bag—a special Portuguese handicraft—into which, after a good deal of argument, they had worked the word 'Paz' (because 'Peace' was safer than 'Workers

of All Countries Unite'). Guilherme emphasised that each of them had had a hand in working at it.

Guilherme rejoined the underground struggle in Portugal, becoming a member of the Central Committee of the Portuguese Communist Party. He was arrested for the second time in 1959 and sentenced to five years. He succeeded in escaping from the Peniche fortress in 1960, but he was rearrested the following year. After another daring escape, this time from the Caxias fortress, in December 1961, he rejoined the underground movement until May 1963 when he was arrested for the fourth time, subjected to savage torturing, and sentenced to ten years in jail.

Most of this was spent in Peniche, on the Portuguese Atlantic coast, and his health began to deteriorate. He complained of pain, and it is assumed that his condition was deliberately neglected, because, despite his repeated complaints, the authorities never allowed him to be properly treated, and released him from prison

only in January 1972 after a cancer growth had been diagnosed at a late stage. He was admitted to hospital in Lisbon. Angela had this news early in March this year, and wrote on March 12:

We must all die, and the best of us die too soon, however old or young. It is how we live and inspire others to live that counts—and if I could embrace Guilherme again now, that is what we would be saying to each other, in any language.

Guilherme Carvalho died on March 24, 1973. His funeral, in his home town of Oporto two days later, was publicly attended by fifteen hundred mourners, including his family and many friends.

And in this same year Caetano is invited to celebrate in London.

IRAQ—OIL VICTORY

Idris Cox

IT is one year since Iraq took over the Iraq Petroleum Company—the big oil monopoly which has exploited the people of Iraq for many decades. Nationalisation took place on June 1 last year, an occasion on which there were scenes of jubilation all over the country. All the vested interests in the extraction of oil from the Arab countries of the Middle East prophesied that nationalisation would bring disaster to Iraq. It did not have the ‘experts’ to direct and manage the extraction and refining of oil; it would not find markets for its crude oil or refined oil; and both crude and refined oil from Iraq would be boycotted in the world market.

Events have confounded these prophets of disaster. It is true that serious attempts were made to sabotage the sale of Iraq’s nationalised oil in other countries. There were even steps to involve reactionary Arab oil-producing countries in new ‘pacts’ which it was hoped would force Iraq to abandon its nationalisation measures. Saudi Arabia’s representative (Shaik Ahmed Zaki Yamani) had talks last October in New York with representatives of the big oil trusts on an ‘agreement’ which provided bigger royalties for Arab oil with greater participation in the control of production. The *Times* ‘Business News’ (October 26, 1972) commented that: ‘Participation on Shaik Yamani’s terms is probably the only alternative to outright nationalisation.’

However, Iraq refused to accept this agreement, but it was signed by four Arab oil-producing countries which are under reactionary rule—Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Abu Dhabi, and Qatar—what are

commonly known as the Gulf states. And so the agreement was signed by these four participants, significantly enough in New York!

Despite the widespread campaign to boycott the purchase of Iraq's nationalised oil, the campaign has produced little or no results. The demand for oil in the capitalist world, as also in the developing countries, is so great that Iraq has been able to take advantage of this situation. Agreement has been reached with the French Government on the purchase of oil; Japan (whose demand for oil is now one third of that of Western Europe) is providing a bigger market; and India is purchasing big supplies—not to mention the expanding market for Iraq's oil in the socialist countries.

Moreover, the Soviet Union and other socialist countries have provided massive economic aid to Iraq, together with teams of oil experts. Assistance has been given for the construction of a giant steel works and other big enterprises, together with technical aid and the provision of technical training in their countries for Iraqi oil workers. Close and friendly political relations have been developed even further during the past year.

The Soviet Union, Hungary, GDR, Czechoslovakia, Poland, and Bulgaria have all helped to break the '*cordon sanitaire*' of the imperialist countries and the oil companies. Their defeat is so obvious that on March 1 this year the oil companies signed an agreement with the government of Iraq recognising the nationalisation of oil, forsaking their claim to be the proprietors of the unexplored oil regions, and withdrawing their objections to Law No. 80 of 1961, which is the basis upon which oil nationalisation took place in Iraq last year.

However, Iraq has by no means solved all its problems of oil production and its sale abroad. Iraq has serious border troubles with Iran and even more so with Kuwait. There are conflicts also between the Gulf States—as between Abu Dhabi and Saudi Arabia over the rights to the Buraimi Oasis. These conflicts are the legacy of British imperialist rule, which before it was forced to withdraw from these territories created the 'emirates federation' in the hope that this would provide a channel for its continued influence.

The Arabian Gulf (formerly known as the Persian Gulf, which is still the name in imperialist circles) borders on a collection of territories ruled by sheikhs who were (and still are) pawns for British imperialism. Nationalisation of oil in Iraq came as a shock, and there will be further shocks to come. Iraq has a stretch of 35 miles of coastline between Iran and Kuwait, and is demanding

two strategic islands at the head of the Gulf as part of its settlement of the border dispute with Kuwait.

In his survey of the problems of the Gulf states, David Hirst, in the *Guardian* (April 4, 1973), admits the frontiers of these states were 'mostly drawn by the British, which are little more than lines on the map. Kuwait's frontiers are more arbitrary than most. In a rational world it would be difficult to justify Kuwait.'

Iraq is anxious to lay a pipe-line across the territory of Kuwait, for this would make far easier the transport of Iraq's nationalised oil to the coast-line of the Arabian Gulf. This dispute is still unsettled at the time of writing, but if there is agreement on this proposal it will be of great advantage for the oil industry of Iraq.

The further success of the nationalised oil industry in Iraq is extremely important for all its people. Left with the legacy of British imperialist domination its economy is still backward, living standards extremely low, and there is still a great deal to be done to enable the people of Iraq to exercise their full democratic rights. It is most urgent that new and better schools are provided, a wider and improved range of social services, still more drastic land reform, and higher wages and better conditions in the factories—together with more democratic rights for the workers in the control and management of industry.

In many respects Iraq is now the most advanced Arab state in the Middle East, but still more radical measures are urgent before it can become strong and powerful enough to withstand the pressure of imperialism and its reactionary Arab neighbours, transform its economy, and raise the living standards of the masses. During a visit to Iraq last November, I was appalled by the scenes of abject poverty in the back streets of Baghdad, and the atrocious housing conditions.

Important steps are being taken to change the situation, and outstanding in this respect is the formation of the National Front of the Arab Baath Party (the government party), the Communist Party, and the Democratic Party of Kurdistan. The process of building this National Front is both slow and painful, but it was never so urgent to make it a reality, not only on the top level, but down below among the masses.

One can understand there are difficult problems to be overcome before this aim is fully achieved. After the 1963 counter-revolution, the Communists in Iraq were hounded from pillar to post, thrown into prisons, tortured and murdered. This went on even after the Baathists came to power in 1967. Considering its aggressive war

against the Kurds, who were demanding the right of self-determination and autonomy within the Iraq Republic (Kurds are one-fifth of the population), the Baath Party realised it could not constantly be in conflict with both the Communists and the Kurdish people—and especially after oil nationalisation when strong democratic national unity was essential.

However, there are still serious differences with the Kurds who claim that the joint agreement of March 1970 is not being put into practice by the Revolutionary Command Council which is wholly Baathist, and that some attacks are still being made against the Kurds. Moreover, there is still discrimination against the Communists. Both the Baathists and the Kurdish people have their daily newspaper, but not the Communists, who are allowed only a 'cultural' weekly paper. As the ruling party, the Baathists are still claiming a dominant position in practice within the National Front. For the proposed National Assembly the number of seats suggested for the Communists is only 10 out of 150.

Iraq is still a long way from being a democratic state, in the sense that its government is freely elected by the democratic vote of its people, from the standpoint of real democratic trade unions, and its popular mass organisations being a real expression of the people as a whole. The discussions for the creation of a broad National Front have been going on for more than a year, and it is clear there are serious risks in losing any more time in striving to achieve this. Measures for the creation of a democratic Iraq are urgent and essential if it is to remain in the forefront of the Arab countries of the Middle East.

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JEWISH EMIGRANTS FROM THE USSR

Andrew Rothstein

IN the 'Notes of the Month', last December, a number of stock Zionist fables about the Soviet Union were exposed for the lies they are. But if there is no discrimination against Jews in the USSR (asks a correspondent in New York), why is it that so many Jews have emigrated to Israel? He says the number is 50,000 'in the last two years', but that is wrong. As the Soviet mission to the United Nations has made clear, that figure applies to the whole period since the end of the second world war—nearly 28 years. Moreover, these were not 50,000 *adults*; half of them at least, as lists published occasionally by Zionists themselves have revealed, were minors. The actual number of families and unattached individuals may be put roughly at 20,000.

Thinking over this question, my mind went back to October 1920, when I was returning from a first visit to Soviet Russia. One of my fellow travellers in the railway carriage on the way from Moscow to the Latvian frontier was a Jew, by appearance and dress obviously of the (not yet former) middle class. Under the Soviet-Latvian Peace Treaty which had been concluded three months before, all persons who had been born, or whose parents had been born, in that part of the former 'Baltic Territory' now being recognised as Latvia, had the right to 'opt' for Latvian nationality, even if they had lived for years elsewhere in the old Russian Empire. In fact, masses of Jews had lived in those parts, notably at Riga, Libau (now Liepaja) and Dvinsk (now Daugavpils). My fellow traveller had taken advantage of the Treaty, and did not conceal—once he had been met by his friends on the Latvian side of the border—either his joy at escaping from 'Sovdepia' (the cant name at that time for Soviet Russia among its enemies) or the fact that by the kind offices of a friendly carpenter at Petrograd he had smuggled out gold and jewels in a secret receptacle hollowed out in one of the planks of the rough packing-case in which the 'optant' was taking out his goods and chattels as permitted by the Treaty.

Now during the Civil War, which had ended everywhere except in the Far East, massacres of Jews had occurred again and again where the 'White Hopes' of invading Western democracy—Yudenich, Denikin, Kolchak, Petlura, Makhno—had set foot: and it was clear that the regime which they hoped to restore would not differ in

essentials from Tsardom. On the other hand the Soviet government had established full economic, political, social and educational equality for Jews: it had abolished the atrocious 'Jewish Pale'—the territories in north-western and southern Russia to which most Jews were confined; it had done away with the hateful 'percentage norm', under which no more than 10 per cent of pupils in any secondary school might be Jews, and only 5 per cent of students in places of higher education (even less in Petrograd and Moscow); and it had jailed, even shot, notorious anti-Semites. Yet here was my travelling companion—and hundreds like him, because the similar Treaty with Lithuania contained the same provision—'opting' out of the land where Jews were safe, into one where no one yet knew what would happen!

There was but one explanation of this phenomenon, of course. It was the fact that *not all* the Jews in Tsarist Russia, but 'only' 94 per cent, had suffered the indignities, the hideous poverty, consequent upon exclusion from all but life as petty traders, pedlars, unskilled labourers and self-employed poor handicraftsmen in the 'Pale', and the gross ignorance consequent upon exclusion from worthwhile education. It was 'only' of that vast majority that even the accepted and neutral Baedeker *Handbook for Travellers* had written in 1914 (p. xliv):

Strictly limited in their privileges, and subject to numerous economic restrictions as well as to the caprice of the Russian officials, they subsist for the most part in a state of physical and moral degradation.

But there was a small part who were not in that condition. They were 'merchants of the first guild'—bankers, large traders, some factory owners, big houseowners—who had risen to wealth out of the miserable majority (as happens in capitalist society), and had the right to live anywhere in the Empire, with their relatives and employees, on payment for five years of 'a very high business licence' (*Russian Year Book*, 1913, p. 697). There were professional people—doctors, midwives, lawyers, dentists, engineers, graduates and students in higher education—who had been lucky enough to get through the sieve of the 'percentage norms', or to complete their education abroad. There were, finally, 'master-artisans', members of the artisans' guild (skilled tailors, hairdressers and the like)—admission to which was even more difficult than to the other grades. It was among these that some 'liberal' opposition to Tsardom found recruits, as well as a small minority of honourable (but necessarily most secret) sympathisers with socialism.

And it was of this class division among the Jews that Lenin wrote, again and again, before the October revolution when he distinguished between the interests of the Jewish working class and other Jewish poor and the nationalism of the Jewish 'bourgeoisie and Rabbis', which he called 'the slogan of our enemies' (*Critical Remarks on the National Question*, 1913). It was of this same division that during the civil war, in a 1919 broadcast, Lenin said:

Among the Jews there are workers, toilers; they are in the majority. They are our brothers, comrades in the struggle for socialism, because they are oppressed by capitalism. Among the Jews there are kulaks, exploiters, capitalists, just as there are among us all. . . . The rich Jews, just like the rich Russians and the rich of all countries, are united in trampling upon, oppressing and dividing the workers.

Obviously my train acquaintance belonged to that fraternity—or had put away sufficient to give him hopes of joining it. Moreover, the very misery and ignorance in which the vast majority of Jews in Tsarist Russia lived, and the petty occupations into which most of them were forced, without any prospect of emerging from them all their lives, made them a promising field for the propaganda of the bourgeoisie and the Rabbis. Zionism—condemned by the international socialist movement, long before the Russian revolution, as hostile to the workers' interests—and religious superstition, even fanaticism, were their chosen weapons. In some areas they were successful, in others the revolutionary Social-Democrats among the Jews had the upper hand. When the October revolution brought freedom for the Jews, the vast majority of Jewish workers took full advantage of it. Most of those whom Tsardom and capitalism had excluded from agriculture, large-scale industry, education and the public services, grasped eagerly at the new opportunities. The trumpeting of Russian White and foreign anti-Soviet propaganda about 'Jews running the Bolshevik state' was the first involuntary tribute to the change. The facts of Jewish advance in all fields, listed in the December *Labour Monthly*, should convince all but the fanatical. During the second world war, in which hundreds of thousands of Soviet Jews played their worthy part, the Soviet armed forces saved millions (not only in Russia) from Hitler's gas chambers.

But it would be strange, and unlike real life, if a tiny minority had not retained or passed on, from one generation to another during these 55 years, some of the old mentality, alien to socialism—and particularly because of the criminal distortions of Soviet policy in regard to nationalities practised at one time, even though they have for years been a thing of the past. It is this tiny minority which

has been 'opting' for life in a capitalist society, just as its predecessors did 50 years ago. We should not be surprised. Its mentality is akin to that of the worker in capitalist society who doesn't mind enjoying the benefits which the struggles of his class have brought him, so long as he is not expected to take part in that struggle himself. The attitude of the Jewish emigrant from the USSR, in all but exceptional cases, is that of the non-unionist 'on principle' and of the 'emigrant' from trade unionism.

But even though some 50,000 Jewish men, women and children have gone that way, no one should forget the 2,000,000 and more Jewish people who are working in socialist enterprise of all kinds, building an advanced socialist society on the way to communism, and who have no intention whatever of leaving a country which is as much theirs as it is that of the Russians, the Uzbeks, the Armenians, the Ukrainians, or the small nations of the Arctic seaboard.

One footnote. Our correspondent asks why there are no Soviet children's schools teaching in Yiddish, 'as was the case in the 1920s and 1930s', since there were 381,000 who indicated Yiddish as their mother-tongue in the 1970 census? He should have said: 'still indicated'—for the numbers of such people have been noticeably declining. They were 1,884,000 in the 1926 census, and 488,000 in that of 1959. The trend is unmistakable: assimilation, as in Britain and other advanced industrial countries.

The fact is that in the early years of Soviet power most Jews were living in the terribly congested areas in which Tsardom had segregated them. It was essential moreover to provide them rapidly with *real* interim primary schools, free of religious influence and able to bring them up at least to elementary proficiency for jobs in the new society. But gradually this situation changed, as expanding socialist economy and political development (especially of the youth) brought Jews to other areas. Then, in spite of large-scale evacuation, the Hitler invasion brought horrible massacres of those still living in western areas. Today the 381,000 mentioned are scattered over many regions, a tiny percentage in each. It would be unpractical to set up special primary schools for them, when they learn Yiddish from their parents (as mentioned last time) —all the more because they would need to learn a second language, that of the republic where they live, for work and continued education.

Our correspondent is wrong, however, when he suggests that this is a violation of Lenin's teaching about even the smallest national minority having opportunity for national expression. Throughout Lenin's writings on the national question there was constant emphasis

on the need, in the case of the Jews, *not* to separate their children in special schools, but on the contrary to educate them in the same schools as the children of the bigger nationalities among whom they were living. He vigorously opposed the separatist views of the 'Jewish Social-Democratic Bund', advocates of the 'cultural-national autonomy' theory, on this very point, again and again, as helping the reactionaries in all camps.

Our correspondent seems to have confused Lenin's views with those of the Bund.

GDR RECOGNITION

Charles Dukes

EVEN to the most bigoted it is now obvious that the German Democratic Republic—cold-shouldered for virtually two decades by most states—has recently recorded a significant breakthrough in the international arena of diplomacy. By the middle of 1969 the GDR had established diplomatic ties with 20 states. Towards the end of December 1972 this figure had risen to 55, and in April 1973 almost 80 countries had thus normalised their links with the GDR. This development undoubtedly also testifies to the realistic political appraisal formulated in June 1971 by the eighth congress of the Socialist Unity Party, whose adopted programme underlined the GDR's desire to establish, on a reciprocal basis of equality, both normal diplomatic relations with all states and also normal relations with the Federal Republic of Germany.

A singular feature of the GDR's latest diplomatic gains has been that such links have also matured with numerous capitalist states including Australia, France, Italy and Great Britain. Differing political motives pursued by the governments of these countries served to force the issue. Understandable in many quarters is puzzlement that Great Britain, presently administered by the most reactionary post-war government on record, has also fallen into line.

In a bid to save face over year-long unnecessary stalling, Heath's government is alleging that the Britain-GDR diplomatic link-up only became possible following the contractual settlement between the GDR and the FRG embodied in the treaty on the bases of their mutual relations concluded in 1972.

As recently as 1962, *The Meaning of Berlin*—issued by HM Government—maintained that Britain's diplomatic recognition of

the GDR was an absolutely unrealistic conception. Moreover, acceptance by Britain and the other Western powers of the division of Germany would be tantamount to a betrayal of Nato and West Germany, described as Britain's most important ally.

In September of the same year a resolution before the British Labour Party Congress at Blackpool urging recognition of the GDR was rejected on the advice of the platform. In 1966 the then Minister of Defence, Denis Healey, whose reputation as a right-wing Labour parliamentarian is well known, declared, in a reference to Nato maps of Europe showing the German frontiers as they existed under Hitler in 1937: 'Maps used in Nato pending a final settlement show these 1937 frontiers.'

Thus this political by-passing of the GDR was still much in vogue only a few years back. And yet by the beginning of 1973, main-road traffic had been restored. Following the publication, on February 9, of a joint press statement officially proclaiming the establishment of GDR-British diplomatic ties, the *Times* commented editorially four days later that this was a welcome step. The paper added: 'There are also more practical reasons for recognition. Trade is one of them, since East Germany is now one of the larger industrial powers.' Suffice to note here that in 1968 British exports to the GDR were a mere twentieth of equivalent West German figures and that this proportion applied analogously to most other western and overseas states whose economic development is now more than ever overshadowed by the dollar crises.

Naturally the respectable and government-approving *Times* was careful not to create the impression that Britain now intended to clamber lock, stock and barrel on to the GDR trade band-wagon. But the intimation is all too clear! Turning its attention to more weighty matters, the same editorial of February 13, 1973, notes in conjunction with the GDR-British diplomatic agreement:

The real question is how we wish relations between east and west Europe to develop. Refusal of recognition would also be dishonest, since the Western powers have no real interest now in pressing for the reunification of Germany. Refusal to accept the division would imply an early intention to remove it.

As if to counter possible illusions the *Times* leader also displayed more traditional political colours, underlining: 'Of course recognition and trade can help to consolidate a government but with luck they may also contribute to its evolution and to progress that benefits its citizens.'³ The undertones are unmistakable and no one ought to overlook or play down the implicit hankering of the imperialist

countries to interfere as much as possible, and above all ideologically, in the internal affairs of the socialist community.

Undoubtedly rank and file activity in many countries, including Britain, facilitated the diplomatic advance of the GDR. This successful campaign was waged in the interests of both countries in order to foster peaceful co-existence in Europe.

THE MUNICH DRAMA (9)

I. M. Maisky

(How Hitler frightened Chamberlain along the road to Munich forms the ninth instalment by Academician Maisky—Ed. LM)

ON September 24, 1938, Chamberlain returned to London from his meeting with Hitler in Godesberg. Now it was a question of what to do next. There were disagreements in government circles. At that moment, though not for long, there was even a certain divergence of opinion between Chamberlain and Halifax. The following entry appeared in my diary:

Hitler's memorandum was sent on to Prague from Godesberg by Chamberlain, but the plane which should have delivered it to the Czechoslovak government came down somewhere *en route*. Consequently Halifax today handed the memorandum to Jan Masaryk (in London). The following talk took place between them:

Halifax: 'Neither I nor the Prime Minister consider it possible to give you any advice in connection with Hitler's memorandum. But personally I should like to say to you, man to man: think well before you give a negative answer. The Prime Minister is convinced that Hitler wants only the Sudetenland, and if he gets it he will not present any further demands.'

Masaryk: 'And you believe this?'

Halifax (sharply): 'I have told you that the Prime Minister is convinced of it.'

Masaryk: 'If neither you nor the Prime Minister want to give us any advice in connection with the memorandum, then in the circumstances what role is the Prime Minister playing?'

Halifax: 'The role of postman, no more.'

Masaryk: 'Am I to understand from you that the Prime Minister of Great Britain has turned himself into a messenger for that murderer and bandit?'

Halifax (embarrassed): 'If you like, yes.'

There was another meeting of the British and French Ministers in London on September 25 and 26. It began on a high note. The

Godesberg memorandum was turned down by both powers (Prague did the same thing). Daladier proclaimed loudly the readiness of France to carry out her obligations to Czechoslovakia, while Halifax proposed that Britain firmly and openly declare its readiness to give France the utmost support in the event of war. Some other Ministers spoke out quite radically.

Information about the moods prevailing in England and France got into the press and political circles. Hitler decided that the big stick had to be brought into action again. On September 28 mobilisation of the German army was proclaimed. Goebbels filled the ether of Europe with frenzied shouts about the evil of Czechoslovakia, the 'intolerable' oppression of the Sudeten Germans, and about the fact that the Führer's decisive blow was not far off and 'Teutonic justice' was to be restored. The political temperature rose rapidly and this had an almost instantaneous effect.

The mood prevailing at the Anglo-French meeting in London began to deteriorate. Chamberlain and Bonnet moved to the fore. The idea of fighting against Nazi aggression gradually faded. Finally the Anglo-French meeting adopted a quite well-sounding resolution, which boiled down to this: in the event of 'unprovoked aggression' the two powers would act in concert. But the British Government did not give a firm promise to support France with armed force if, as a result of carrying out her obligations to Czechoslovakia, she were to be drawn into war. Throughout the two days of the meeting not a word was spoken about joint action with the USSR. It was at this time that a most important meeting took place between Chamberlain and Baldwin, his predecessor as Prime Minister. Lloyd George told me (I quote an entry in my diary for October 1, 1938):

A week ago Baldwin went to Chamberlain and told him: 'You must avoid war at all costs, at the price of any humiliation. Just think what would happen if matters went as far as war! Our utter lack of readiness would immediately become evident and then the indignant public would simply hang you and me from lamp-posts. . . .'

Lloyd George declared that this idea played a very big role in Chamberlain's behaviour. The frightened Chamberlain decided on his own responsibility and at his own risk to 'make a last attempt to avert war'. On September 26 he sent Horace Wilson to Berlin with a personal letter to Hitler which attempted to persuade the Führer to settle the question at the diplomatic table. Hitler flatly rejected Chamberlain's proposal and did not even send back an answer with Wilson. On September 27 Wilson returned in such a state of

panic that the British Government announced certain mobilisation measures. Fresh, particularly strong pressure began on Prague. Chamberlain demanded complete capitulation.

The following facts indicate how confused Chamberlain was. To begin with he sent Benes the Godesberg memorandum indicating that in the circumstances the British government did not consider it possible to give any advice. But in a few hours he sent Benes a second telegram which insistently recommended that Benes cease any resistance, for, he wrote, the only alternative would be German invasion and forcible dismemberment of the country, as a result of which Czechoslovakia, regardless of the outcome of the bloody conflict, would all the same not be able to regain her former borders.

On September 27 Chamberlain made a broadcast speech which, to put it mildly, could scarcely evoke a surge of firmness and courage among British people. In that speech were the well-known shameful words: 'How horrible, fantastic, incredible it is that we should be digging trenches and trying on gas masks here because of a quarrel in a far away country between people of whom we know nothing.'

At that moment Hitler dealt another deft, psychological blow to the British Prime Minister. On the evening of September 27 Chamberlain received an answer to the letter Wilson had handed to Hitler. The Führer again assured Chamberlain that the Sudetenland was his last territorial demand, that, if the two of them succeeded in settling this question amicably, completely new prospects would open up for Europe, that an amicable settlement was quite possible and that only those narrow-minded, obstinate Czechs were preventing all the difficulties from being overcome.

Hitler's calculations proved justified. This little carrot once more had its effect. Chamberlain's obstinacy stiffened and he immediately decided that fate had chosen him as the saviour of European peace. He replied to Hitler that he proposed the settlement of the Czechoslovak question at a 'conference of four'. He was ready to travel to Germany once again. The French Government supported Chamberlain's initiative. To win Hitler for this plan, the British Prime Minister turned for help to Mussolini. Bonnet did the same. The Rome dictator, fearing that Hitler was about to drag him into a European war, for which he did not consider himself ready, supported the convening of such a conference and persuaded Hitler to postpone the mobilisation of German troops scheduled for September 28 for another 24 hours. . . .

On September 27 the People's Commissar for foreign affairs said

to me in Geneva: 'Set off for London immediately! At the moment you're needed more there than here. . . .'

The next day I arrived in London, went straight to the Houses of Parliament and got there precisely at the 'historical moment'. Chamberlain was finishing his speech. He waved a piece of white paper he had received as he was speaking: it was an invitation from Hitler to come to Munich the next day, September 29, for 'the conference of the four'.

BOOKS

Strike: A Live History 1887-1971

R. A. Leeson

Allen & Unwin, 246 pp, £3.75

THIS BOOK consists of recollections, by 83 men and women, of strikes in which they were involved during the last 80 years. Mr Leeson contributes a general introduction, and a brief verbal link between the six periods into which the recollections are arranged.

The contributors include 22 from engineering and metal working, 14 miners, five each from textile and building, and smaller numbers from 11 other industries. There are also two from the forces, two clergy and a farmers' wife. The recollections vary from brief sketches of incidents to well thought out studies of a particular dispute. Each in its own way reminds the reader that strikers are individuals with a variety of viewpoints, characters and reactions, and that in addition to the issue on which they are united—or disunited—they have their own problems. One of the difficulties facing strike leaderships is that the longer the dispute, the more acute these individual problems become.

The strongest emotional impact is made by the miners, whose accounts

of the grim twenties, with hunger, victimisation and police terrorism, are sharp reminders that strikes are part of the class struggle, with the capitalist state ever ready to use the law, repression and brute force against the workers. The importance of workshop organisation as the democratic basis of trade unionism comes out most clearly from the engineers. Tactical problems are dealt with clearly by, among others, Arthur Attwood of the RAF, Les Buck on the Duple's dispute of 1950, Charlie Doyle on Battersea power station and Jim Slater of the seamen, while John Potter of Pilkington's Glass shows that right-wing official collaboration with the bosses is by no means a thing of the past.

As Mr Leeson himself remarks, these recollections do not add up to a history, either of a particular dispute or of the period, but this point seems to have been overlooked by whoever titled the book. Explanatory notes, especially on events or names unknown to the reader, are necessary and welcome, but should be accurate. Saklatvala was elected to parliament in Battersea North, not St Pancras.

True it is that not enough has been written from the workers' point of view about strikes, and Mr Leeson has set a good example in going direct to those involved for their recollections. But the field is not as totally barren

as he suggests. Many strike leaders have written for the socialist and communist press. A search through *Labour Monthly* would reveal several articles. Ben Tillett wrote a booklet on the 1911 London Transport strike. Pamphlets which spring to mind include A. J. Cook on the 1926 general strike, and those on the Rego, Firestone, 1933 London busmen and 1950 Duple's strikes. There must be many more. Nor should we imply denigration of the work of our historians. Robin Page Arnot may not have been a miner but miners' strikes are most vividly dealt with in his history of the miners. The facts of the disputes are an essential basis, and individual recollections help to establish them, but collective discussion is also needed to reach conclusions and make them widely known, if lessons are to be learned and the trade unions are to use this powerful weapon in a way which strengthens working class unity and socialist purpose.

JOHN MAHON

Revolution in Angola

Members of the Liberation Front

Merlin, 62 pp, 60p

THIS SUMMER we are to witness an orgy of odious junketings to celebrate the six hundredth anniversary of the Anglo-Portuguese Alliance. A harmless bit of historical reminiscence? Not at all; the Portuguese ruling *élite*, overlords of a semi-feudal economic system in Portugal, losing on all three fronts in their colonial wars in Africa, condemned almost universally by international opinion, are desperately seeking to shore up their failing position by wooing increased backing from Western capital. British government and business are eager to respond. Behind the flummery of state visits by the

Duke of Edinburgh to Lisbon and Prime Minister Caetano to London lies a calculated political motive: to cement still further the friendship between the two governments, a friendship which, under the aegis of Douglas-Home in particular, has become increasingly intimate since 1970.

The plans of the Portuguese ruling class and their British friends will nevertheless misfire. For, in giving themselves prestigious publicity, they at the same time awaken the interest and anger of the British people at what is happening in Portugal and in the Portuguese-occupied territories in Africa. For those who have been working to support the liberation movements in Mozambique, Angola and Guiné-Bissau, the silence of the British information media has been a continual obstacle. Portuguese fascism, unlike that of Spain and Greece, seems to have been entrenched for so long that even progressives have forgotten to be angry; while in Africa the Portuguese policy of inviting only their friends to report on the wars has obscured the immense importance of the issues being fought out. But this state of affairs is now changing. No one can any longer be unaware that among our so-called allies in Nato is a régime which not only controls a crude police state in Europe, but clings to a racist, wantonly exploitative colonialist posture in Africa, of which the basis has been aptly and frankly summed up by Caetano himself: 'The blacks must be seen as productive elements organised, or to be organised, in an economy directed by whites.' But to counterattack the propaganda streaming forth this summer from the friends of Portugal, you need facts and figures; and here lies the importance of *Revolution in Angola*. The title is a little misleading, for the heroic and principled revolutionary struggle of the People's Movement for the

Liberation of Angola (MPLA) is summarised only in a few introductory pages. The book is, rather, a short survey of Portuguese colonialism in Angola today, revealed not through historical or personal narrative but through the cold compilation of economic figures. The picture thus uncovered is shattering: when one reads of an illiteracy rate of 99 per cent; of the number of doctors in Angola declining from 260 in 1962 to 210 in 1965; of a profit rate of 500 per cent for coffee and 800 per cent for diamonds, Angola's two principal exports; of import figures in which wines account for almost four times as much expenditure as tractors; of a state budget in which expenditure on public health and education is too insignificant to rate a mention; then the sufferings and oppression of a people can be imagined as vividly as from a volume of descriptive material.

Furthermore the book reveals to what extent the Portuguese in Angola are caretakers for the foreign capitalist interests which control many major economic sectors. The diamond company Diamang, 'a state within a state', controlled by De Beers of South Africa, the Morgan Bank of America, and the Société Générale of Belgium are the most conspicuous examples. Increasingly of course this is intended to be the pattern for the future. As Portugal casts around for new sources of revenue, so the greed of capitalist monopolies will batten more ravenously on the untapped resources of Angola and Mozambique. Gulf Oil, with a growing empire in

Cabinda in Angola, has set a notorious example. British business, somewhat outpaced in recent decades, will be panting to catch up.

Which brings us back to our own responsibility and capacity to change the situation in Portuguese-occupied Africa. The ever-widening conflict between the forces of liberation and the Portuguese armies is as momentous as the Vietnam war; but much more than in Vietnam, the British people are directly involved. The oppressor is a European state which, lacking the resources of its own, gets from Britain and a few other Nato powers the economic sustenance, military equipment and political support without which it would be powerless to continue. Even within Europe, Portugal is becoming isolated: the governments of Norway, Sweden and Denmark have pledged their support for the liberation movements; the West German Social Democrats are wavering. In Britain the Labour, Liberal and Communist parties have all taken a strong line against Portugal and in favour of liberation; it becomes all the more necessary to mobilise and inform the rank and file. The immediate goal—to end the present alliance and to forge a new alliance between the people of Britain and the peoples of Portugal and Africa—is one that can be achieved. We all have the duty, in this year especially, to learn about the situation, to inform others, to demonstrate, to carry forward a mass campaign towards that goal.

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The Liberation Movement in Russia 1900-1905

Shmuel Galai

Cambridge University Press, 326 pp., £7.20

THIS IS THE STORY of the movement to found a Liberal Party in Russia which in fact culminated in bringing into existence the bourgeois Constitutional Democrats ('Cadets'). It shows the attempt to marry diverse elements with irreconcilable ideologies in a single party: the liberal nobility, the city intelligentsia, the technicians and professional workers in the apparatus of the Zemstvos; men opposed to the autocracy with men who still saw the Tzars as capable of playing a progressive role. They found formulae on the way to keep them together, while the tyranny of the Tzar hung menacingly over them: but when the autocracy collapsed the makeshift coalition collapsed with it.

The movement to found a 'liberal' party in Russia ran parallel in time with the movement to found a party of Marxism based on the working class. The oppressive tyranny of the regime weighed heavily on both movements. For elements among the Liberals the Marxist doctrine of the hegemony of the proletariat in the carrying through of the bourgeois revolution was a comforting doctrine, an acceptable one. And the common need to circumvent the Tzar's police and censorship made it sometimes possible for the revolutionary Marxists to use the same machinery of distribution of illegal material into Russia from abroad, while maintaining a fierce and uncompromising hostility in the field of theory and practical activity.

This volume contains much of great interest: a description of 'Police Unionism' (Zubatovism) in action, surely an utterly Russian phenomenon; a description of the anti-Jewish

pogrom at Kishinev, winked at if not actually organised by Nicholas II and his advisers; a description of the massacre of 1,389 people and the injuring of 1,300 more in the 'riot' which accompanied the 'festivities' following the coronation of Nicholas II at Khodinka field. The characterisations of Struve, Miliukov, Shipov and other leaders of the liberal movement, and of their political pronouncements, are of great interest.

The book is of course a bourgeois piece of research: its material is drawn from memoirs, histories, illegal publications, congress and conference archives; and it has been well drawn together. It is plain that at £7.20 it is out of the reach of most of us: but it will find its way into university and other libraries, and will stimulate interest in the formative period of the twentieth-century Russian revolutions in which, on the whole, the bourgeois elements here examined played an inglorious part.

BEN AINLEY

Humanism, Its Philosophical, Ethical and Sociological Aspects

M. Petrosyan

Progress Publishers (Central Books), 308 pp, 75p

THE MOST monstrous 'big lie' of all time is surely that of 'imperialism with a human face'. The left is too timid in exposing the hideous face of inhumanity, decadence and genocide, concealed behind imperialism's mask of guardian of humanist ideals. In her analysis of the concept of humanism in all its aspects Professor Petrosyan has made an important contribution to this task. Her demonstration that humanist ideals were born of the age-old struggle of the oppressed against their exploiters, and are fully realised today in socialist society, is of value to all progressive people.

L.S.

CONFERENCE RESPONSES

OUR champions have been at work again selling *Labour Monthly* at trade union conferences before and after that wonderful upsurge of demonstrations against the Tory Phase-mongers on May Day.

Our March issue was out in time for a useful sale at the Special TUC: Dai Francis, writing in this issue, describes the great turnout of South Wales miners who took part in the lobby that day. One of our volunteer sellers during the lobby 'explained' afterwards that the crowd made it impossible for him to work his way through to the parcel of *LMs* that was waiting for him—a likely story!—but the sale amounted to 40 in spite of that mishap.

A Fife miner ensured that the journal was on sale at the Scottish TUC in April, and sold 20. We have received at least one new subscription as a result of one of those sales, and other new subs are coming in which may well be from copies sold at conferences and on May Day itself. A report has come in as I write that 39 more May copies were sold at the AUEW-TASS conference.

We hear that Bob Wright's article on International Trade Union Unity in our April issue was reprinted on April 12 in the Turkish daily *Yeni Ortam*. The Union of Turkish Progressives in Britain say: 'This is one of the remaining progressive papers being published under considerable difficulties at the moment in Turkey, and it has a high circulation.' Their note adds, 'We appreciate the invaluable service which *Labour Monthly* renders to the working class movement in Britain and all over the world.' It would be hard to find a group of people more hard-working and devoted to the very serious problems of their country than this Turkish group. We owe special thanks to them for their regular contribution to the *LM* fund.

Donations received during April totalled:

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Our thanks to you all.

Nicola Seyd

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Theories of Value and Distribution since Adam Smith, Maurice Dobb. Cambridge University Press, 296 pp, £3.60.

Open Secret: The Kissinger-Nixon Doctrine in Asia, edited by Virginia Brodine and Mark Selden. Harper & Row, 218 pp, 75p.

Crises of the Republic, Hannah Arendt. Penguin, 200 pp, 40p.

Japanese Imperialism Today, Jon Halliday and Gavan McCormack. Penguin, 280 pp, 50p.

The New Inflation, Aubrey Jones. Penguin, 228 pp, 40p.

Europe: Journey to an Unknown Destination, Andrew Shonfield. Penguin, 96 pp, 30p.

Shop Stewards, J. F. B. Goodman and T. G. Whittingham. Pan, 286 pp, 60p.

City of the Yellow Devil, Maxim Gorky. Progress Publishers (Central Books), 138 pp, 40p.

John Strachey, Hugh Thomas. Eyre Methuen, 316 pp, £4.50.

Workers' Control, Ernie Roberts. Allen & Unwin, 308 pp, £4.25.

Education in East Germany, Mina J. Moore-Rinovluceri. David & Charles, 142 pp, £2.95.

Feuerbach: Opposition of the Materialist and Idealist Outlooks, Karl Marx and Frederick Engels. Lawrence & Wishart, 128 pp, £1.25.

A History of Modern Ireland, Edward Norman. Penguin, 330 pp, 50p.

The Uses of Disorder, Richard Sennet. Penguin, 160 pp, 35p.

Portrait of India, Ved Mehta. Penguin, 590 pp, 80p.

Peace for Vietnam?, Ivor Montagu. BCPV, 20 pp, 5p.

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